



CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY
CENTER FOR POLICY STUDIES



OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE

NADEZHDA FEDOTOVA

The Role of Moscow State Institute of International Relations in Social Transformation

2001/2002

NADEZHDA FEDOTOVA

The Role of Moscow State Institute of International Relations in Social Transformation

The views in this report are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect those of the Center for Policy Studies, Central European University or the Open Society Institute. We have included the reports in the form they were submitted by the authors. No additional copyediting or typesetting has been done to them.

Institute of education experiences now fundamental crisis not only in Russia, but on a global scale. "The Crisis of a university" is a subject of national discussions in many western countries. The subject of debates is, whether the educational system should produce narrow and professional experts having a quite specific knowledge and skills, or it should mainly educate the competent and accountable members of society, to provide an all-around development of abilities of the person.

Russia has not stayed away from these tendencies. "Today we, maybe, not understanding it entirely, experience the real revolution of education ... in the purposes, values and orientation, in contents and character, in structure of the direct participants of educational process, in its duration and methods, and at last in amount of support, which our society provided and is going to provide with education".

The analysis of development of reforms has allowed to conduct comparative research of Russian education at different stages of its development and to find out some of internal factors of its change.

I have considered it to be of use to conduct the comparative analysis of university level education in USSR, in 90-s' and now, when the reforms of education are declared.

Russia has inherited from the Soviet Union mass and rather qualitative education system, on maintenance which one in the best times almost 8 percents of a GDP were transferred. In 1989 the mean wages in education system made 71 % from that of industry.

In the basis of a university model of education in Russia the German model is fixed. It envisioned availability of such major principles, as 'fundamentality, universality, stage by stage development and systematizing. (For Example, the Higher Imperial technical school was taken as the basis of creation Massachusetts technological institute")

In the Soviet period higher education in USSR, despite of isolation of the country, had a number of positive features. Not focusing on them, we shall mark only one - fundamentality of higher education, which means that it was saturated by basis disciplines of theoretical character. This doubtless dignity came in an inconsistency with absence of the market: the graduate of this type of educational system is highly competitive and mobile in market economy, he easily specializes and alters his major. The absence of the market resulted in a separation of highly educated professionals of a theoretical sphere from practical implementation of their knowledge, with the exception of a defense sphere, where they incorporated.

In the 90-s' this feature of Russian education was preserved only at some leading universities. Other universities become oriented to the great extent on applied knowledge, that does not also bring positive outcomes in the time of information revolution and of creation of "knowledge society" in the West. As the result we get reduction of a theoretical level of knowledge of graduates.

Updating the programs, introduction of new scientific disciplines such as sociology, culturology, politology etc., happens simultaneously, standards of Russian and western education merge. Some universities institutionalized multilevel education (bachelors, experts, masters).

The universities, but has met difficulties because of absence of adequate of structures of employment. In Russia there is no practice of working place given for the people with the diplomas of bachelors. They are treated as people who have not finished their education, with appropriate consequences for their placement. The majority of them do not work for the job they were trained for.

Evaluated by students as more objective, it is at the same time more difficult and dependent on quality of teaching to the greater extent, than the traditional one. The introduction of a credit system began already in 10 high school establishments of country (for example, Higher School of Economy, Russian university of Friendship of the People, Novosibirsk university, Tomsk university).

Innovations in Russian education have resulted in creation of the more diverse forms of training, sometimes too diverse and not having a unified standard. Especially this is true about private universities, many of which are not capable to compete with state owned universities and were the form of privatization of education extremely for the sake of a profit.

However crisis tendencies have begun to be observed in higher education simultaneously: decrease of quality of education, education system began to experience an acute deficit of qualified personnel. Besides since 1995 debts have begun to arise and to be multiplied in an education system: the debts of educational institutions on payment of bills, then - in wages. Thus, the modernization of the education system, and first of all of its structural and economic mechanism, has become to this time strongly indispensable. The main problem of education is that it for 10 years receives insignificant a small share - from 15 up to 40 % of indispensable costs.

Factors of corruption in education as well as it's underfinancing, and conversion of technical specialties (which was successfully finished) initiated a series of educational reform's measures.

Some of reform's phases:

- 1992. The law "About education" is adopted
- 1993. Work on the educational standards began.
- 1996. The Federal law "About higher and post-graduate professional education" is adopted.
- "The National doctrine of education in Russian Federation ", prepared by Ministry of Education, Russia. It is adopted by Government of Russian Federation (October 4, 2000).
- "The Recommendation of parliamentary hearings about the concept of reforming of education in the project of the program of Government of Russian Federation on a long-term perspective " (November 14, 2000).
- "Modernization of Education" section, Strategy for Development of Russian Federation till 2010.
- "The Concept of Modernizing of Russian education till 2010 ", which is adopted by Government of Russian Federation (December 29, 2001).

Despite these changes, 90-s' are not period of reforms of education, since the changes had not systematic and purposeful character. They mainly borrowed western forms of training, but the unsystematic character of the borrowing quite often destroyed former experience and did not lead to something of better. For example, the basic non-realized system project in educational policy of Russia is 1992 year Law of Russian Federation on Education ".

By a 2000 crisis of Russian system of education was highly recognized.

The project of renovation of Russia adopted by Putin's government actuated also reform of education, which henceforth is formally bound with the general Strategy of Russian development till 2010, which is known as G.Gref (minister of development and trade) project. In the project attention given to education was insufficient. The projects stated inability of the state to finance education and that it is mutual responsibility of the state, society and individuals to distribute financial of burden of education. Here it was not taken into account that the majority of the population, especially it's highly educated layer is poor, that those who are rich do not want to invest of neither in education, nor in any other sphere of Russian economy (with the exception of petroleum industry), and remove their capitals abroad; that there is no real civil society in the country and the middle class is weak.

Not satisfied by the program proposed by G.Gref the society started to search for more comprehensive approach to educational reform. The project of Gref was critically perceived by Ministry of education, rectors of universities, which, by recognizing necessity of market transformations in of education, are sure, that aims of education can not exclude poor and not rich population. The Ministry of Education offered the project of reforms, called "The Concept of Modernizing of Russian education till 2010" where a key role play such principles as the accessibility of education, it's susceptibility to western experience while preserving the best national traditions, termination of corruption in education (admission to university for bribes or by means of artful manipulation in a system of preparation for entrance exams (as a latent bribe), and as happens to some private universities, payment in many of which acts as a guarantor of a good evaluation at examination and shelter from army for young people).

In 2002 tuition-free education rate at state universities is preserved at the level of 40,7 %. Those students who fail to pass examination will pay in 2002 - 2003 from \$ 4000 up to \$ 7000 per year. In Russia only rich people can pay that cost, middle class level of income is very different from that of middle class of the West.

The simplified model of educational reform can be seen in three main points –12 years of school education, entering high schoolestablishments by results of a unified graduation examination (UGE) and introduction of a system of the state nominal fiscal obligations (SNFO), permitting graduates with excellent records of UGE to study in higher education institutions of the country free of charge.

The project of a 12 years school studies, which has originated a set of negative responses from the population and teachers, however is still developing by the ministry taking into account Russian realities. This form of education is that the European countries and recently to their number were added Ukraine and Byelorussia have taken as a model.

The unified graduation examination (UGE) for the second year is carried out in Russia experimentally. In the last year UGE was conducted in five regions, this year 16 new regions were added to the experiment, and in the following year it is planned to conduct UGE in two thirds of regions of Russian Federation.

The reform is planned to be undertaken in some stages, starting with reforms of school education and proceeding to reforming of higher education. There is a problem of coordination secondary and higher education, how the third stage of school education will be built (whether in school will study university curricula or something other). The unique body engaged in this is Social-humanitarian council at the minister of education office aiming at construction of the unified strategy of education - school education + higher education. Nowadays activity in adjustment of school and higher education is conducted and in the field of teaching domestic and foreign history (it is the unique program, which one on the present moment is developed).

The purpose of a school stage of education: active socialization in market conditions as well as conditions of information processes and globalization, and social adaptation. At the second stage the purpose of entering higher educational establishment is not put, as it was in USSR (this value is no more a reference point). The purpose is one - adapting.

Narrow specialization is offered for those who want to continue education in higher education. In the two last grades the student should select one of 5-6 programs (humanitarian, scientific, mathematics and computer science, economy and law, technical, agrarian), and this possibility should be given to each citizen of Russia. Each schoolboy should have capability to receive profile education at the expense of the state. The profile school, some reformers argue, will allow to overcome not only formal universalism of higher education, but also an objective gap between the requirements of higher and secondary education. What is important – refusal of universalism and fundamentality of education in educational policy, that was an integral part of training earlier. Unfortunately, it can not strengthen applied significance of education when role of knowledge in the world is increasing.

Today cautious steps on separate experimental platforms realize reform. The time of entering in universities - summer of 2002 has become time of scrambling with corruption as by force methods, and by means of a new graduation examinations made on local place and permitting according to records to apply for study at diverse universities.

" The Unified examination will give advantages by granting of the state grants on obtaining of higher education to the not best students, but, at first, children of the rich bribers, and, secondly, students from locales with a heightened level of corruption ", note some experts.

There is also danger, bound with variability and personalizing of educational programs (in itself idea, certainly, is quite good) – it sometimes results in not permissible decrease of quality of education for poor (they are treated as unfit and not gifted).

For successful realization of the Concept of modernization of education approved by government in December, 2001 international loan is taken. Total amount of the loan for five years is 50

million of dollars. From them federal part is - 12 million of dollars (24 percents), regional - 38 million of dollars (76 percents).

The modernization of the Russian education system professed more than a year ago, rises heated disputes. It is interesting that problems of contents of education after a beginning of appropriate experiment are on a second plan. Most of debates focus on introduction of a unified graduation examination , state nominal fiscal obligations , change of the status of educational establishments.

The concept have been subject to changes during 2000-2001 years. Now the writers of the concept of modernization of education had to refuse many radical solutions, including 12 years of school study. Actually 12-year's education has become a question of good will. A unified graduation examination, the second key point of educational reform, nor has found of unequivocal support. Experiment on UGE have been decided to proceed.

As for the unit of social problems. The government has excluded the main point on introduction of the state minimum social standards in education, eliminated the idea about increase in the nearest period of a minimum tariff of the pedagogical staff up to a level not below than the cost of living. The rising of the average salary of the teacher up to an average level of industry by 2004 is postponed already till 2006.

The Russian public is not satisfied with reduction of a share of fundamental education, considering it national quality of education, arguing that fundamental education allows fast respecializing and adaptation to new conditions, while narrow professional knowledge becomes outdated in conditions of globalization very fast. The transformation of higher education in education for the selected, policy of the unequal status of education (to the detriment of to quality), no guarantied equal access to education are criticized. The pursuit for commercialization of education is criticized, as a result of which quality of the students is lost. There is a suspicion that the ambition of the educational executives predominates above social problems.

The external factors of reforms of Russian education.

The reforms were also initiated by Russian openness, entering global community both international and European educational community. A. Adamsky, one of the most active propagandists of the project of modernization of education, writes, that the essence of ideas, offered the reformers, is a globalization, "entering of Russia in the global market of education".

The external factor in the project of reforms is taken into account in two aspects: from the point of view of ability of the Russian professionals to meet with world and European standards and focusing on world experience when training students. The problem of conformity to the international standards is put forward. Realization " of a credit system " in high schools of our country, the transition to a unified graduation examination, has underlined Russian Minister of Education, will promote recognizing of the Russian formation abroad.

Sorbonne and joint declaration of the European Ministers of Education convened in Bologna on the 19th of June 1999 on The European Higher Education Area also play their role. Though both these declarations are not signed by Russia, there are on-going debates over the documents and orientation on them, struggle between supporters and of opponents of European standardization.

Globalization and education.

The majority of modern analytical works in higher education are no separable from understanding such process as a globalization. And globalization is treated as two-sided process: effect of a globalization on development of higher education and the return effect. The basic idea, with which I treat the problem of globalization's impact on education - unity of globalization and localization, which famous English scientist R.Robertson has called "glocalization". Globalization demands certain universalization and standardization of education ensuring participation of a professional from any country in the global market. However this ability is frequently provided by specific nature of national education (programmers of India, mathematics of Russia, paleontologists of Mongolia etc.).

Several approaches in the study of effect of a globalization on operation of educational institutes are used. One group of analysts underline, that under effect of globalization the conditions of development of higher education have changed (that is seen as reduction of state financing), and it results in commercialization of higher education, peaking of a competitiveness. Some consider that the following course of action is inevitable in conditions of globalization " ... Only the paranoid, only those who are constantly looking over their shoulders to see who is creating something new that will destroy them and then staying just one step ahead of them, will survive. Those ... that are most willing to let capitalism quickly destroy inefficient companies (and organizational establishments as well, - N.F.), so that money can be freed up and directed to more innovative ones, will thrive in the era of globalization. Those which rely on their governments to protect them from such creative destruction will fall behind in this era ".

The supporters of the other point of view underline, that globalization promotes growth of international component in activities of universities. It is exhibited, for example, in an expansion of international contacts and cooperation of high school institutions, increase of a universal component in training, change of the educational plans - introduction engaging of the foreign pupils, opening of international virtual universities, opening of campus branches abroad, international research projects etc. These analysts underline mainly positive aspects of effect of a globalization on education.

Russia is aimed at entering a global world system, with a worthy place in a world-wide educational field. Therefore it is important to pay attention, how the western experts evaluate effect of a globalization on education and educational establishments in particular of western countries. The globalization stems from western countries, they and are main beneficiaries of global transformations. Therefore reference to western experts' opinions and experience of western countries is justified.

The theoretical understanding of new conditions, in which one has appeared formation and the universities per the last 20 years are given by the neo-Keynesian consensus concept, developed by Guy Neave and Frans Van Vught. They argue that there was a neo-Keynesian consensus in higher education operating from the end of the war to the late seventies. This consensus saw higher education as having an economic aspect in the advancement of resource development through public investment, a political aspect in raising of the overall level of education, and a social aspect in the provision of access and opportunity. Neave and Van Vught argue that this consensus has now broken down due to a greater emphasis on the need for higher education to respond to industry and ensure national economic survival.

Some writers suppose, that it is the economic component of a globalization that is most powerful, thus the economic philosophy of a globalization most hardly affects educational practice - priorities of the market, privatization, deregulation of economy and reduction of a role of public sector. Moreover, in opinion of many western experts, globalization is one of the most fundamental challenges, the university is facing which puts into question the social institute itself.

Many countries in particular English-speaking, carry out educational policy affected by new realities of globalization. In Great Britain the minister of education in 2000 has indicated necessity of fast adaptation of universities to globalization's effects, mainly by organization of distant learning. He has underlined, that the universities, which will not act that way, will not survive, and the government will not save them. The similar point of view is stated by the minister of education of Australia, who is asserting that for survival in a global world it is necessary that universities enter market relations and become the enterprises of business oriented on the inquiries of the consumer.

The strengthening of global rationality results in the similar forms of educational systems, though it does not mean, that a unified universal educational system will ascend the throne in all countries. The conclusions of a similar kind are anticipatory, since the processes of globalization are only generated, globalization is not a completed process.

Some western analysts suppose, that exactly the globalization, formation of the global market has become one of the basic reasons of reducing of state financing of higher education in 90-ies. The growing financial burden on higher education, growth of a competitiveness from private and corporate universities have resulted in strengthening of attention to higher education in a view of an estimation of its efficiency and contribution to national economic prosperity. Thus, higher education institutions have to considerably take into account needs of a society, coming closer to market is required. "The market (as the institute) starts to determine ultimate goals, aims and organization of education, displacing from this orb the state. Students are even more often considered not as the citizens having the right for education, but as consumers of educational services, and on the basis of such approach their relationships with educational establishments are built".

For maintenance of their place in the global market, increase of number of highly paid jobs governments of western countries (USA, Canada, the Great Britain and Australia) conducted policy "of academic capitalism". It's main characteristics are: introduction or increase of tuition

fees at universities, transition from giving students grants to granting educational loans, and also undertaking of commercially beneficial research to the detriment of fundamental in high school institutions. The new economic realities force higher education establishments to achieve increase of incomes at the expense of commercial activity, engaging of private donations, to contract with firms for realization of research and training of personnel etc. However part of the fault lies on educational establishments themselves: "Academe itself is partly responsible for the danger. Some universities have been all too willing to involve themselves in commercial activities and to compromise their traditional roles".

Impact of globalization, G.Subotzky argue, is encompassed in appearance of enterprise, market-oriented universities, and in change of control of higher education. The globalization exerts influence on realization of research projects, and it in turn, results in organizational and structural changes in higher education. As a corollary the universities become enterprise market-oriented, inside them there is market behaviour and management. They serve business interests: they are guided by commercialization of scientific research, growth of private financing, creation of corporate universities. In outcome there is a fragmentation of teaching and research. The similar tendencies destroy traditional organizational structures and functions of higher education. Therefore many analysts write against the utilitarian and consumer approaches to education. "Subjecting higher education to regulation by the W.T.O. would destroy one of the most valuable components of any society ... For centuries, universities have performed a central function in society: they provided education in practical fields of knowledge, as well as preserving cultural traditions. In the 19th century, science and research were added to the academic mission. Society treated universities as special institutions precisely because their goals went beyond everyday commerce. Now, all of that is under threat".

Globalization of education has a danger, which is called McDonaldization of education in western literature. We frequently see this phenomenon in Russia. It means simplified rationalization eliminating a creative element from education. According to the G.Ritzer's concept the fast-food chain McDonalds may be regarded as a metaphor of the continuing rationalization of modern society. He defines four main dimensions of the process: efficiency, quantification and calculability, predictability and the substitution of non-human technology for human technology (or control).

Many western experts come to a conclusion, that dominant economically oriented paradigm contradicts public predestination of higher education and maintenance of its contribution into public good, fundamental studies, creation of a more fair society. "Governments and other public authorities need to give academic institutions the support they need to fulfill their mission. Constantly squeezing their budgets, demanding ever-greater accountability, and insisting that academe fundamentally change its goals do not serve the public interest in the long run", - argues P.Altbach.

BOLOGNA PROCESS

In 1997, the Convention "On Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications in European Region" was approved in Lisbon. Russia has joined this convention in 2001. In 1998, the 1st World UNESCO Conference was held which approved documents such as «World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty-First century: Vision and Action», and «Frameworks of priority actions to reform and develop higher education." The aim of these documents was to develop common principles and a long-term schedule to achieve the common goals.

The Sorbonne Declaration, approved in 1998, aimed to harmonize the European education system, and co-ordination at national levels between the countries of Europe. This Declaration was signed by four countries - France, Germany, Great Britain, and Italy.

Sorbonne's ideas had been further developed by the Bologna Declaration of 1999, which already had a more precise purpose to converge educational systems of European countries. A system of measures was introduced, which could "promote the necessary convergence and a higher transparency of Europe's qualifying structures," in order to improve their commensurability, counterbalance with US higher education system, and to increase European international competitiveness. The following was proposed: adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees, adoption of a system essentially based on two main cycles (bachelor-master), establishment of a system of credits, promotion of mobility, promotion of European cooperation in quality assurance and promotion of the European dimensions in higher education.

In 2001, the Prague Communiqué was signed which supported the Bologna Declaration and confirmed the importance of its provision for European education. The Bologna Declaration was complemented by the idea of continuous, lifelong education.

The Bologna Declaration is one of the most important documents in the sphere of integration of education for the United Europe, as well as for the involvement of Europe's outlying countries, so far not belonging to the Union, in this process. Up to date, the Declaration is signed by 32 countries including not only European Union members, but also Croatia, Cyprus, and Turkey. So far Russia does not officially participate in the Bologna process; but the country is highly influenced by this process.

These documents target trends towards integration within the European system of education, and moreover, a trend of ensuring formal unity that is based on the following components: adoption of a system based on undergraduate and graduate degrees, a statement on the free mobility and exchange of experts and professionals within the territory of Europe; which requires a common framework of comparable degrees, diplomas, diploma supplements, academic transcripts, and majors. It is also necessary to recognize the importance of credit system for increase of student's mobility; to develop a common system of European qualitative criteria in education; and consideration of European component of quality as a necessary structural component of national education systems in all countries of the region.

At first sight, the above-mentioned documents make the most favourable impression, they seem to show its care and concern about students, teachers and administrative personnel of the

universities, and to provide an excellent link between educational structures and students' future workplaces. However they have not been accepted with equal enthusiasm and understanding elsewhere in Europe. Contradictions emerged in balancing the national and European components of higher education, especially in the countries that are neither members nor associate members of the European Union, and Europe's outlying countries. The latter include Russia.

The topic of the Sixth European Conference on Higher Agricultural Education held in Greece in September 2002, "Harmonisation in European Higher Agricultural Education: Dream or Nightmare?" is a proof that even EU countries may have problems and contradictions in observing provisions of the Bologna Declaration.

Unity and variety in the European education space

It is evident that there is a variety of educational systems, scientific schools and approaches to understanding of what are education specific features in the nowadays Europe. In addition to the variety and differentiation, European education's general feature is a qualitative definiteness, which easily distinguishes it from the American or Chinese education. In Europe, the unity and variety of educational systems is a historic tradition.

It is possible to assume that this educational system can be transformed by means of a certain educational policy. One possible way is to diversify the European education and to maintain its multicultural nature. However nowadays one of European trend features is represented by an integration of education policy. The policy entirely complies with the integration tendencies that are dominating in Europe, and thus deserves a serious approval.

Nevertheless, such European countries as Germany, the Netherlands, Finland and some other have problems integrating the "European education block," as it is referred to by the Bologna Declaration, with their national traditions of organisation and the concept of education. Despite of the fact that these countries have signed the Declaration, experts from these countries did not come to a common conclusion on the Bologna Declaration and demonstrate a variety of opinions arguing the issue in scientific discussions, conferences and publications.

The Bologna process does not properly allow for the features of national educational systems in the countries of EU, and even less in the countries which are not members of the Union.

As it was pointed out by a Russian researcher, A.I. Avrus, in XIX century Western Europe had developed a few models of universities. In Prussia, A. Gumboldt introduced an idea of the university which combines education and scientific activities. English universities were mostly for gentlemen education, while French ones for those involved in practical activities. Cardinal Newman introduced a concept of Catholic university, which was to develop students through human sciences and philosophy. These traditions have influenced present education systems in these countries to a great extent. Having emphasized convergence Bologna Declaration seems to characterise its only one dimension – adoption of Anglo-American model of education by Europe; it says no word about significance of German educational system experience,

Russia, being on the outlying side of Bologna process but nevertheless having a social demand for reforms in its sphere of higher education, has a complicated attitude to the Bologna process. Those experts and policy-makers involved in education policies development are insisting on Russia's immediate participation in European education structures, regardless of what are the terms. E.g., according to S.Bergan, Head of the Higher Education and Research Division of the Council of Europe, as many as possible European countries should be involved in the process of development and establishment of the common education space in Europe; Russia should participate in this "break-through" either. A purpose of the Bologna process is to «enable students and lecturers freely move through the whole Europe,» S.Bergan says.

As to Russia's feedback, Chairman of Committee for Education and Science of the RF State Duma A.Shishlov believes that the Bologna process «creates a basis that allows us to enhance the mobility of students and teachers so that either students and teachers had an opportunity to change their universities and the country of study as often as they like to, even every other semester.» He goes on saying: "If we aren't for just living in the present, but are planning for the future, we are simply obliged to provide Russians with such conditions that they could study and work abroad for a certain period of time...».

Authors of the Bologna Declaration might have been highly surprised by such interpretation of the document, as actually it says nothing about employment problems per se. The Declaration is rather devoted to the issue of improvement of communications within scientific networks in order to remove internal obstacles for dialogue and to increase mobility, first of all in the frameworks of the integrated part of Europe. It is not by chance that they use the word "employability" (i.e., ability to find a job) rather than just "employment." Regarding possible negative consequences of Bologna movement membership, this Russian expert says: "losses threaten to [only] those unwilling to keep the modern pace; as to the winners, students and teachers of Russia's leading universities will be first beneficiaries of integration in the education sphere, and the whole society will benefit after all."

As we mentioned above, even German and Finnish experts doubt a possibility of such large-scale exchanges. As to Russia, the Bologna Declaration says nothing about visa requirements for countries of Eastern Europe and Russia. Recently, Russians do not need visas only to Egypt, Turkey, and Cyprus. Russia is neither a member nor an associated member of the EU, so the minister's optimistic expectations are rather overestimated.

In this regard, the RF Ministry of Education's official position announced by Minister V.Philippov looks unbalanced. In September 2002, minister expressed a high interest in Russia's involvement into the Bologna process: "If we continue to differ so much from the other countries... we could not expect to be participants of European common processes. In the meantime, we have to participate [in the life of European community], if only we are not going to be isolated behind an "iron curtain" again ." As Mr. Philippov argues (October 21, 2002, Nezavisimaya Gazeta ("Independent Newspaper"): "There are corporate interests of education and employment market, so that graduates of Western universities have better chances to find a job in Western Europe... Today education is a key issue in politics."

In his opinion: "... we are not very welcomed there; however Russia really need to get involved in this [European] alliance in order to become more competitive in the international market. Signatory countries are going to establish a common system of testing and evaluation of knowledge— a system of credits, which allows for unification and comparability of all curricula and academic majors of high schools of these European states. For example, a French student could study one semester at a college or university in his country, then another at the Warsaw University, and receive credits for all taken courses. If we drop out of this education area, our education will not be recognised in Europe."

In his interview to the journal "Russia in global politics" (issue 1, 2003), he argued that official attitude towards the Bologna process is similar to the attitude towards membership in the World Trade Organisation: "We are not considering, and will not be entering the WTO on uncertain terms and conditions, simply for the sake of the membership. It is a process that must be mutually beneficial." Moreover, as he says in conclusion in this interview, "[Russian] higher education institutions would lose a lot from Russia's entering the Bologna".

Therefore, a country's positive perception of integration policy in education is straightway related, first of all, to the country's practical involvement into the European integration process. For those countries disadvantaged in this regard, such as Russia, their participation in the integration of education looks less and less attractive without participation in the integration of Europe. Russian students that are qualified and willing to continue their education in Europe are facing not only the lack of common traditions in educational systems of Russia and other European countries, but also more serious obstacles such as visa restrictions and the lack of financial support (which is quite common for most students). As regards a few financially independent citizens and nouveau riches (the so-called "new Russians"), they do not need a common Education Area to study at European and US universities as they already do. Those of them who really wanted to study have successfully met the whole variety of requirements that vary from one national university to another. Of course European countries are now interested in those Russian students able to pay for their education.

Demographic processes in Europe as well as in the US enable universities to survive at the expense of education and training people worldwide. In this regard, Europe might be interested in opening European universities for international students, but it is not yet clear whether it would concern Russian students or not. Anticipating such opportunity, or rather to say having arranged and agreed upon having this opportunity as a key provision of the future co-operation, Russia would be more interested in the Bologna process. From our point of view, this could explain the "flexibility" and unsteadiness of the Russian Minister of education's position. The Bologna Declaration as well as the other documents mentioned above, which have been ratified by many countries including those not integrated in Europe, do not ensure an integration of the latter in the European education system.

We share HESP expert V.Tomusk's (Open Society Institute, Budapest) surprise, expressed at the 24th Annual EAIR (European Association for Institution Research) Forum "Crossing National, Structural and Technological Borders: Development and Management in Higher Education" (September 2002) regarding the fact that outlying non-member European countries are eager for joining the Bologna process, and they do this not having thought about the difficulties they

would face but treating this Declaration as a mere invitation to Europe. In this regard, Russia's position seems reasonably cautious.

Thus, at nowadays stage the integration policy cannot overbalance Europe's traditional variety of multicultural educational systems, as well as multicultural approach in educational policy.

Integration and multicultural approach in European education content and quality assurance

To illustrate the above mentioned, let us refer to the situation around particular academic courses and disciplines. E.g., political sciences in Germany, Finland, and Russia are taught in different ways in each country; there are qualitative differences in curricula developed by each of the countries. Many European researchers pointed out that the term "European dimension" is not clearly defined in political sciences. As a result, academic degree received in this field can scarcely be equally recognized throughout Europe. Even among the universities of one particular country, there are a variety of interpretations in this area of knowledge. The British approach, as it was referred to at one of the recent conferences devoted to analysis of consequences of Bologna Declaration for teaching political science, as well cannot be considered an ideal European standard, as political science has been diversified throughout Europe depending on the diversity existing in political culture. European political scientists are therefore referring to difficulties in following the Bologna streamline.

I think that in disciplines such as philosophy, history, business study, law, sociology, and cultural sciences that have developed different national schools in different European countries, the integration of content components of curricula programs can hardly be achieved. There are evidences that transition of national schools of physics, chemistry, agricultural sciences, and engineering to the Bologna education model is also hindered as the common European component is poorly defined in these fields.

For example, what could be the European dimension in laws if Great Britain's law is based on precedent system, while France's and Russia's on code systems? What could be the European dimension in cultural science if in Russia it is considered a science studying society through the focus of culture, while in Great Britain it is considered cultural anthropology?

From the point of view of the discipline structure of science, it is also difficult to define any universal standards. For example, the American sociologist I. Wallerstein, the former president of the World Sociological Association, argued that traditional division of sciences into economy, politics and sociology is a classic liberalism model, according to which all these areas considered independent from each other. An interdisciplinary, problematic approach is therefore more adequate in today's situation. In cooperation with other professors from the Stanford University, Wallerstein has developed a program to focus education on interdisciplinary research. Some European universities are interested in pursuing such changes, but some are not. The Bologna Declaration and other international mandates on integration of education do not provide an answer to the question: how to build a unified content component of the education system that respects the principle of diversity.

This fact is stressed out as well in Prague Communiqué that underlines the importance of European content component of knowledge. It says that it is necessary to "further strengthen the important European dimensions of higher education and graduate employability ... to increase the development of modules, courses and curricular at all levels with " European content, orientation or organisation" (Italics mine – N.F.).

Analyzing possible consequences of the Bologna Declaration, the European Association for International Education points out that the integration policy in education cannot be aimed at refusal of the existing variety of traditions in education, and that multicultural approach to content and organisational components of education is absolutely necessary: "comparability not homogeneity should be the aim; ... the guiding principles should be those of pluralism coupled with transparency."

Russia's university education is based on the German model that had been introduced initially in Peter-The-Great's time. It is based on a set of cornerstone principles such as fundamentality, universality, phase structure, and systematic approach. These principles have proved their importance and validity, having allowed the Russian education to become a remarkable phenomenon. (For example, the Emperor Higher Technical College was a basic model to establish the Massachusetts Technological Institute) . Until recently, physicians with Russian diplomas can work in Great Britain without additional validation of their diplomas or taking additional tests. Russian physics, biologists, mathematics, software programmers and computer engineers, as well as specialists in the fields of arts, literature and humanities work throughout the world. Despite the ideological censorship in the field of social sciences in the Soviet period, many Russian economists, financiers, philosophers and scholars also work or do their postgraduate research in Western educational institutions.

Higher education in the USSR, despite some isolation of the country in the Soviet period, however had a number of positive features. Not focusing on all of them, we would like to mention only one – Russia's higher education is fundamental, i.e. this is education with academic-biased content component and organisation focused on theoretical courses and disciplines. Rather valuable in general, this feature was contradicted by the lack of the market economy in the Soviet time. In market economies, graduates of this type of educational system are highly competitive and mobile; they are able to master new skills and knowledge easily and to improve their professional level. The underdeveloped market has resulted in separation of highly-educated professionals, working in academic fields, from the spheres of practical implementation of academic knowledge, with the only exception for the military-and-defence industries that had a stable demand for educated professionals.

In the 90s this feature of Russian education system could be found at just few leading universities. Most universities focused rather on applied studies that did not bring positive outcomes in the time of informational revolution and creation of "knowledge society" in the West. As a result, the quality of theoretic knowledge and academic qualifications of graduates decreased remarkably.

It is worth mentioning that unification processes within the educational system in the Soviet period have been counterbalanced by subsequent backward processes in the post-communism

time. A large number of new universities and higher educational institutions emerged, which had neither a principal education model, nor standardised curricula programs. Nor did they have a comprehensive organisational structure: amidst them, there were state universities, non-state universities, branches of western universities, universities established within the structures of particular industries and so on. Today Russia attempts to bring this variety to some unity, while at the same time respecting the existing pluralism and multicultural approach. The point is to synchronise the policies of integration and respect to multicultural nature of education. Though less respected than in Western societies, the right of universities for autonomy has been proclaimed in Russia in the first RF law "On Education" (1992). Later, in accordance with the 1996 edition of the Federal Law "On Higher Education and Professional Training," the liberal freedoms and rights of universities have been reduced to a certain extent.

This law has outlined basic principles of state policy in the sphere of education, including the following:

- ✍ The right of the RF regions and republics to develop their own policies in the spheres of higher education and professional training
- ✍ Consistency and continuity of educational process;
- ✍ Integration of Russia's system of higher education and professional training into the international system of higher education, with the full respect for the achievements and traditions of the Russian higher school, and a focus on its further development;
- ✍ Competitiveness and transparency in processes of setting priorities for further development of science and technology, education of professionals, professional training and improvement of skills;
- ✍ Governmental support of professional training and education: state guarantees of financial support for higher education institutions, accessibility of education for citizens of the Russian Federation; priority of fundamental and applied scientific studies in the field of higher education and postgraduate professional training;
- ✍ Guarantees of the right of RF citizens to higher education and post-graduate professional education and training, which has to be available free-of-charge on terms of the open merit-based competition;
- ✍ Guarantees of the right of citizens of the Russian Federation for the freedom of choice of courses and models of study and professional training, as well as of the major and the university. Strengthening of universities autonomy and independence;
- ✍ Building up a general structure of higher education and postgraduate professional training; Development of principal national standards;
- ✍ Specification of levels postgraduate professional training and temporary parameters of education; Improvement of legislation in the sphere of management and self-governance in higher education institutions; and Development of legislation on education quality assurance, financial support and property rights.

Nevertheless for Russians the overintegration of education, even at the European level, looks very much like unification of education in the Soviet time. That is why administrators of Russian universities insist on necessity to preserve the "unity within diversity" in regard to the organization issue of Russia's educational system. For instance, the need for "unity within variety" has recently been stressed by pro-rector of the Moscow State University V.V.Mironov.

In Mironov's words, higher education is like a multi-storeyed building. At the top levels of this building there are national top universities - a couple of leading higher education institutions having their own unique curricula and ensuring the highest level of academic development. Lower levels are the universities that focus on certain areas of knowledge; they have more standardized curricular. In the basement, there are higher education institutions that produce highly-specialised professionals for particular industries. At these levels the universities curricular are very much standardised.

To some extent, this could be considered a national Declaration: though not official, it expresses a common opinion of many professionals working within the Russian system of higher education. It does not have a common point with the Bologna Declaration. However, its position shows a weak point of the Bologna Declaration – the difficulty to combine the university autonomy and a standard which is referred to as the "European dimension."

Experts argue that Europe can move forward from the disorganised system of degrees to disorganisation of the quality estimation and assurance system, in the same pluralistic mode.

Reforms of Russian quality assurance system are of special importance because of the current decrease in quality of academic education, as a result of fast, drastic reforms and commercialisation of education. Russia's level of corruption in the sphere of education, resulted from shortcomings of the market, does not ranks the world's highest , nevertheless it does exist, becoming a reason for increases in the number of low-quality universities, and making state universities a source of illegal income and bribing for corrupt officials.

In Russia, there are Education and Methodological Associations (EMA), specialised in particular disciplines and areas of study, and a system of accreditation. The Council on Education Quality Assurance in Economics and Law has been established under the Russian Federation Ministry of Education. In 2003-2005, a national quality assurance system is expected to be established. Starting from 2004, establishment of internal institutional systems of quality assurance would become a necessary condition for official accreditation of the newly established universities. It is worth mentioning that currently Russia's system of quality assurance is more advanced than European systems, though it can barely be taken as an ideal template.

Thus, the European education component appears to be rather formal and declarative.

A threat of "McDonaldization" in higher education

The Bologna Declaration points out that its main goal is neither standardisation nor unification of education, but its compatibility and transparency, high mobility of students, integration of educational systems in the framework of Europe and, in the future, in the global scale.

Let's outline the principal provisions of the Bologna Declaration. Here they are:

- efficiency
- mobility,
- comparability

competitiveness,
compatibility
transparency
quality assurance
credit system

The McDonaldization of society means that fast-food chains may be regarded as a model of the ongoing process of "rationalisation" of modern society. Such principles sound wonderful, but in the situation of the lack of ideas regarding the content component of education, they not only promote successful development of education in Europe, but also its McDonaldization. The world 'McDonaldization' applicability of principles that are in use in McDonald's restaurants, in other spheres of society:

Efficiency
Calculability
Predictability
Control

It is evident that these two groups of principles are similar to some extent. E.g., "efficiency" always implies reduced duration, reduced drop-outs, credits, Bachelor /Master structures relevant to market, mobility, comparability, competitiveness, and transparency. "Calculability" is mostly related to the system of credits. "Predictability" depends on transparency, availability of the two-degree system, compatibility, and credit system. P.Ewell argues that credit system measures instructional activity, cost (credit as a surrogate for cost), attainment (credit as a surrogate for attainment). As element of notion of predictability is product standardization (bachelors-masters). There are also moves to modularise and to semestrise education etc. The concept of control is not well developed, but intentions are completely clear to perform control by means of formal procedures (e.g. quality assurance). A well-known American sociologist G.Ritzer reviewed the phenomenon of Mac-universities and rational principles of McDonaldization . He analysed and criticised McDonald's formal system of rationality, which after all appeared to be irrationality. Just alike McDonald's restaurant could never entirely substitute for a "real" restaurant, a 'McUniversity' could not compete with a real university that can offer master-classes, outstanding faculty, community of gifted students, - a university that itself is a laboratory of thinking, not just a knowledge-consuming institution. According Scottish researchers who applied Ritzer's methodology to analyse Scotland's higher education, "efficiency in higher education means that it should serve the economy more effectively, develop and sustain closer links with industry and commerce; the search for efficiency in teaching is complimented by a concern for standards and quality. As a free market the market of education requires competition. Time is money and it should be spent productively - virtual universities, distance learning.

Mentioning the influence of McDonaldization higher education, Ritzer shows what could mean the principles of McDonald's restaurant in the university world: "In order to introduce this information technology on a national or international scale it would be necessary to standardise the curriculum and the quality control procedure. Calculability means that everything is measured, quantified and cost: the number of credentials a person possesses, great attention to the quantity of publications, the ranking of the place in which a work is published. "Such an emphasis on quantity adversely affects quality in many ways." "Most courses run for a standard

number of weeks and hours per week. In the main, little attention is devoted to whether a given subject is best taught in a given number of weeks or hours per week.

Predictability: it is achieved by placing an emphasis on discipline, order, formalisation, routine. "Predictable texts lead to predictable courses and, more generally, to a predictable educational experience," multiple-choice exams and grading are very predictable.

Control – replacement of humans by non-human technologies exerting control over the process of education: "spontaneity and creativity tend not to be rewarded, and may even be discouraged ..." while students are taught to embrace the rationalized procedures of rote learning and objective testing ”.

Similar concerns should be taken into account while introducing provisions of the Bologna Declaration.

European component of organisation of education: bachelors and masters, system of credits.

As we already mentioned, the Bologna Declaration focuses primary on the formal aspect of European dimension of education organisation rather than on its content component. Its most essential points are the two-degree system of education (a system based on two main cycle degrees, bachelor's and master's), and assurance of mobility of students throughout Europe with the help of the credit system.

The two-degree system of education is related to improvement of the quality assurance system. One can advance to the graduate stage only if passes successfully the undergraduate cycle. It is proposed to establish a three to four year undergraduate cycle. The Bologna Declaration considers the bachelor degree, granted upon completion of the first stage, as adequate to the market requirements in the employment market that requires this particular level of skills. Second stage brings a master degree. Third step results in earning a doctoral (PhD) degree.

International Declarations on integration of education, especially the Bologna Declaration and the Prague Communiqué, insist on the two-step system of degrees. Many European universities have already recognised this system. It is also accepted by a number of Russia's universities. According to Minister V.Philippov, a two-level bachelor-master system began to develop in Russia in the end of the 1980s as a result of transition to the market economy. When it became clear that the system of obligatory assignment of graduating students (according to which postgraduates used to receive jobs in accordance with the planed economy provisions) had become obsolete, the demand arose for a more flexible education system . Currently in Russia,167 higher education institutions are already involved in work on the bachelor- master system.

According to the RF law "On Education" of 1992 and its amended edition of 1996, the structure of Russia's higher education includes:

- ? Basic professional educational programs of the second level with four-year period of study, granting a bachelor qualification validated by a diploma that certifies the student's area of study, and major or specialisation;
- ? Basic professional programs of the third level with a total period of study of 6 years, granting a master qualification validated by a diploma that specifies the graduate's area of study, academic (or pedagogical) specialisation, or major and specialisation;
- ? Basic professional program of the third level with a standard period of study of 5 years, granting a professional qualification (e.g., "engineer," "teacher," "economist," etc.) validated by diploma that specifies the graduate's occupation. The program is structured as a one-year program, or a program based on a corresponding bachelor degree.

In Russian education system, where the first level corresponds to four-year period of study, the only goal of the two-level education system is to ensure a high-quality selection of best students for study at the second level. Upon the successful completion of the second level, graduates receive one of the two degrees" specialist (mostly for practical work) or master; the latter can continue education for an advanced degree and has the right to teach at higher education institutions.

The second component – compliance of the bachelors with the market - is inadequate to the Russian conditions. German and Finnish experts note that their employment markets situation makes it highly doubtful that the first-level graduates will be in demand, especially if the period of study at the level amounts to three years.

According to the above-quoted European expert S.Bergan, even in Europe "the labour market changes very slowly; it would take a long time to converge it with the education system. Bachelors will become a marketable product in the labour market, but it would take time. So far they either have to find a job or go for a master degree” .

In Russia in particular this is an urgent problem. Many graduates cannot find a proper job to work as professionals, or become unemployed. Professionals with an advanced degree have better chances to find a proper job than bachelors who are considered undereducated by most employers.

In addition to inadequate responses of the employment market, there are other Russia's features that are barely compatible with the new system. As an example of such features E.Shevchenko, Head of Department of Administration in International Education of the Institute of International Educational Programs of the St.-Petersburg State Polytechnic University, refers to conservatism of Russia's (and not only Russia's) education system, and the lack of information .

Minister of education Philippov believes that the two-stage education system is not actually adaptable to Russia's conditions. Arguing the minister's opinion, the Poisk newspaper comments: "Employers considers the bachelor a raw product rather than a highly educated professional. Only master is considered a valuable professional. Until recently, over the past 10 years, a market demand for bachelor-degree professionals has not yet emerged in Russia. It is a big question whether the situation can change if Russia joins in the Bologna process."

In this situation the transition to the two-level (bachelor's and master's degrees) system may result in migration of most "practice-oriented" students, such as lawyers, to study abroad, in the countries where the shortest university courses are available (e.g., 3 year bachelor's and one-year master's programs). "If we want to have competition, then not only the conditions for having an academic degree should be the same, but also the conditions for access to the profession. Small differences are not a problem, but if the differences are too big there will be flows of students to certain countries".

Besides that, students would prefer those countries that have greatest demand for bachelors or graduates of short-term programs. Here again we are turning to the problem of mobility, which depends not only on education status, especially for Russian citizens. Even globalisation process that maintains an intensive exchange of capital, goods, and ideas, could not ensure the pre-war (World War I) level of population migration – not to mention the European integration and opportunities available for Europe's outlying provinces.

By virtue of misbalance between the two-stage structure and the labour market structure, today many of those Russian universities, formally have already switched to the two-stage system, prefer to produce professionals with a master-like qualifications rather than a bachelor's degree, even for the areas of standard practices.

Another important point of the Bologna Declaration is a system of credits (such as the ECTS system), which is expected to ensure students mobility within the boundaries of Europe. Credits could also be acquired in lifelong learning, and used outside the limits of European system. Credit system has a number of advantages: flexibility, simplicity and credibility .

Credit systems are introduced by a number of Russian universities. Credit transfer system is being introduced in approximately 10 universities and institutes as an experiment. The idea of the credit system is to achieve transparency and transferability of educational programs, thus enabling students to "increase academic mobility," i.e. to change universities during the period of study. This system allows for changing universities, even every other semester, without any delays in academic schedule or a loss of time, through the system of credits accumulation. In Russia, the system has not yet become widely applied. On July 19, 2002, Minister of Education Philippov has signed a law "On Organisation of Works to Develop Procedures of Credits Accumulation for Students to Acquire the Content Component of State Educational Standards in Professional Education." Experiment on introduction of credit system has being held at Russia's University of Friendship, and the Moscow International University of Econometrics, Informational Science, Finances and Laws.

Nevertheless, As the EAIE emphasised, even in signatory Bologna countries there is a risk for arbitrary or inconsistent recognition of transfer credits. It warns against "such an instrument risks becoming a "straightjacket" unless there is provision for it to be applied in a flexible way... Institutions should have substantive powers to decide on their methodologies of recognition, taking into account differences of institutional profile and academic infrastructure such as course prerequisites for a particular degree or qualification."

To have the credits system recognised in Russia, in order to facilitate integration of the country into the European education system, it is necessary to diminish visa restrictions, to ensure the free and open access of Russian students to college entrance exams in higher education institutions in Europe, to provide scholarships and financial support to most gifted but financially disadvantaged students, taking into account Russia's financial situation. (Otherwise children of the so called "nouveau riches," that often are not willing to study but rather to escape the obligatory military service, or to find more comfortable conditions for life, will occupy European universities, spoiling the spirit of academy and the concept of education).

Even if we limit discussion to educational processes per se, it should be stressed out that it is absolutely necessary before introducing of credit system to ensure formal recognition of Russian education as equal to the Western. For instance in Latvia today validation is required for the Russian diplomas and kandidatskaya (a Russian equivalent of the first scientific degree) diplomas, even those received from the leading national universities, such as the Moscow State University, and institutions of Russia's Academy of Sciences.

One could comment: enhance reforms of your national education system, and the access to the European education will be open to Russian students. However Russia seems to choose a different position: ensure conditions for mobility, and we accept the transfer credit system and other provisions of the Bologna Declaration.

This opinion is not correct. Today's misbalance is Europe-biased: not less that 10 thousand Russian students are currently studying in Europe, as compared to only between 2,000 and 2,500 thousand Europeans studying in Russia (mostly linguists) . However it should be taken into account that the number of the students involved in higher education courses of study in Russia amounted to 2,624,300 Russia in 2000, and a total number of students in Russia amounted to 4,739,500, i.e. 280 students per 10,000 people . The data make it evident that the number of Russian students studying abroad is very small. In the meantime, a small number of European students studying in Russia can be explained by language difficulties, poor living conditions, the lack of promotion, and the lack of diploma validation system.

Such exchanges look complicated for European lawyers: "...exchange is very difficult when you are focusing on narrow legal education on national legal systems. It is easier to exchange when you are engaged in academic education in a general way".

As we already noted in regard to the Bologna Declaration, the "European dimension" in political sciences remains unclear. Is the degree of political scientist comparable throughout the whole Europe? What way is it possible to integrate a period of study at a different university into the student's study plan, how can the credits received from different universities be compared?

Europe's and Russia's Incentives in the Bologna Process

Let us briefly outline the main Europe's incentives for the approval of the Bologna Declaration.

Targeting the world's most popular, Anglo-American model of education, bringing the European system into the compliance with this model: "In recent years, the Commonwealth, Latin America, Asia and Eastern European countries have all adopted the British-American model in some form or another. What all these systems have in common is a basic structure differentiating undergraduate and postgraduate studies. The general consensus in Europe at the moment seems to be that the two-cycle system is so prevalent worldwide that Europeans will only succeed in isolating themselves unless they conform to international standards". Prevention of brain drains: " In the early 1990s for the first time ever, there were more Europeans studying in the United States than Americans studying in Europe. This trend continued to grow late into the decade as more and more American institutions looked to Europe to compensate for losses incurred by the economic crises in Asia and Latin America" . Europe's attempt to adjust to the global changes while preserving its own identity: «While Europeans need to consolidate their diverse systems of higher education and become more like the rest of the world in terms of curricula and degree structures, the real challenge will be whether or not Europe can adapt to the changes engendered by globalization without losing its identity» . Ability to compete successfully with the American education: according to Bologna Declaration: "...the objective of increasing the international competitiveness of the European system of higher education. The vitality and efficiency of any civilisation can be measured by the appeal that its culture has for other countries. We need to ensure that the European higher education system acquires a world-wide degree of attraction equal to our extraordinary cultural and scientific traditions" (This goal can be achieved by the only way: as a result (and not the purpose itself) of excellent education, student-oriented attitude, greatest attention to research and administration issues.) Commercial interest: «These past decades the intensive education of professionals for foreign countries has become one of most profitable-earning exports; it is considered amidst the most important priorities of state politics as well as university politics in the USA, Great Britain, France, Germany, Canada, Japan, and recently Australia. The world market of educational services is estimated at 35 billion dollars. The US receive more than 12 billion dollars (a 30% share) annually for education of foreigners; Australia receives 3.6 billion dollars (12%), and Russia 100 million dollars (0,3%) annually» .

Russia's Incentives:

Russia is interested in recognition of the Russian education as equal to the European, as well as in validation of Russian diplomas, at least those issued by the leading universities and institutes of Russia's Academy of Sciences; Russia is interested to increase the number of students studying at the foreign universities, as compared to the current level, as well as to internationalise the Russian education and to successfully compete for international students at the international educational market, to benefit from teaching European students. Russia considers the process of integration in education as a part of the general European integration processes.

The European documents on integration of European education, discussed in this article, and especially the Bologna Declaration, are devoted to pursuing the policy of integration in education. This policy most likely will be unable to diminish the multicultural character of educational systems of Europe, as well as the multicultural trend in education policy. For the outlying European countries not integrated in the EU, such as Russia, the integration of education problem appears to be a part of a general problem of integration in Europe; it seems to have some attractive features, but to be impeded by obstacles that are not related to the field of education, as well as by the problems originated from national legacies in education, and indifference of the Bologna Declaration to the content of education. Also there could be unintended far-reaching consequences that we can not consider and predict nowadays. Because of this, any forecasts regarding efficiency and duration of the Bologna process would be now hasty and precocious.